



# City of Greenbelt

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **GREENBELT'S ONGOING COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE**

In the aftermath of the United States' withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, the City of Greenbelt reaffirms its commitment to address climate change and reduce its carbon footprint. Mayor Emmett Jordan confirmed Greenbelt's commitment by stating, "The City of Greenbelt is going to continue to aggressively pursue policies and practices that minimize our impact on the environment."

Greenbelt's zealous dedication to the environment and its sustainability is wide spread through its leadership, staff, residents and businesses. City staff includes a full time Sustainability Coordinator, an Environmental Coordinator, and a Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member that direct and serve as liaisons to a variety of citizen boards focused on the environment such as the Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (Green ACES), the Green Team, the Zero Waste Circle, the Forest Preserve Advisory Board, the Advisory Committee on Trees and more! Numerous non-profit and community based organizations also focus on climate change and environmental stewardship. Add all that to the fact that Greenbelt is also proudly home to the largest concentration of Earth Scientists, many working at NASA Goddard Flight Center, and to the commitment that Greenbelt originally made to honor the Paris Climate Agreement, and you have Greenbelt occupying a leadership role in the sustainability of our environment.

Over the last decade, the City of Greenbelt has taken many steps towards improved sustainability. The city mitigated the energy efficiency of its facilities by upgrading the HVAC systems at city buildings, retrofitting street and building light fixtures with LED lighting and in 2012, moving to the purchase of 100% of its power from wind alternatives. Overall the city has reduced its energy use by 718, 973 KWh/year.

The City of Greenbelt has shown leadership by becoming certified through Sustainable Maryland Certified Program, a prestigious designation which requires numerous environmentally friendly actions which will sustain the quality of life over the long term. To achieve this certification, Greenbelt created a citizen-based Green Team that delivers events and projects that promote and model environmental sustainability, as well as educates city staff, elected officials and the community on practices that contribute to a green lifestyle.

Greenbelt provides a large variety of volunteer opportunities annually for citizen engagement in watershed stewardship through: organic gardening, tree plantings, tree protection projects, invasive species removals and litter clean up events, zero waste events, composting and much more. In 2016, over 4,300 volunteer hours were served during environment friendly events and at least 10 free workshops were held on topics such as composting, rain barrels, and rain gardens.

Last year alone, the City of Greenbelt's refuse and recycling programs diverted over 1,800 tons of waste from the landfill through comingled recycling, electronics and paint recycling, shredding days and yard waste diversion. Twice Monthly Donation Drop-Off collections also provide citizens with opportunities to recycle and repurpose a large variety of clothing and household goods.

The Green Team's Zero Waste Circle provided education and composting at 23 zero waste events resulting in 2,419 additional pounds of waste not going to the landfills. In addition, our Public Works Department has implemented a composting program for food scraps in its facility. Composting utilizes food waste to enrich the

nutrient content of the soil. The City provides spaces for composting demonstration projects at the Chesapeake Education, Arts and Research Society (CHEARS) Three Sisters Demonstration Gardens, which is a public private partnership on City owned land.

The City's commitment to the environment and climate change does not stop there. The City is slated to continue future improvements at its Municipal Building, Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center and Springhill Lake Recreation facilities. Many of the City's fleet vehicles use alternative fuels. Water conservation is promoted through the City use of rain barrels and the participation in programs which provide them at a reduced rate to our citizens. Greenbelt is loyal to stormwater, sediment, and erosion control programs as stewards of the Chesapeake Bay and local tributaries.

For more information on Greenbelt's sustainability efforts, contact Luisa Robles at [lrobes@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:lrobes@greenbeltmd.gov) or Erin Josephitis at [ejosephitis@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:ejosephitis@greenbeltmd.gov) or call 301-474-8004.